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To: Senator Toni Harp, Representative Toni Walker, Co-Chairs, Appropriation Committee, CGA
And Members of the Appropriations Committee

Re: Waive of benefit to the surviving spouse (Joseph Connolly issue)

Joseph Connolly was a teacher's teacher, a role model for all. He dedicated his life to his family, his profession, and his faith in God and human beings, all of whom and which bear and bore incredible results.

I taught for 38 years in South Windsor and had the pleasure and professional pride and privilege to know Joe. Joe, as you will hear during testimony on March 19th, touched the lives of thousands of youth not only as an exemplary English and technology teacher but as the middle school director of the annual student musical. It truly was an honor to be a colleague of Joe's within the South Windsor School System.

Joe's sudden passing a few months ago at a young age would be lasting heartache enough for any family. However, one omission on his behalf (during years of dedicated and effective teaching, his marriage, further education, and birth of two children) harmfully has reduced benefits to his wife and children, so much so that there is a very real possibility that Joe's family must leave their modest home. Without detailed mention, also in jeopardy is the college education of each child.

I ask you that you reach into your hearts and support the needed legislation to allow Joe's family to receive the full pension that he earned during his dedicated 22 years of teaching. Today's society is filled with so many unsavory actions and ills. Joe Connolly tried to ameliorate such from the lives of each child he taught through teaching motivation. Any human being who would run two entire casts for a middle school musical to ensure that EVERYONE, and I mean EVERYONE, would have a part is beyond a dedicated teacher. This person was a saint and loved by everyone. Please honor Joe by affording his family the dignity of his pension.

Respectfully,

Daria M. Plummer

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